

COUNTY OF YORK

MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 12, 2001 (BOS Mtg. 4/17/01)

TO: York County Board of Supervisors

FROM: James O. McReynolds, County Administrator

SUBJECT: Application No. UP-571-00, Berrane Enterprises, Inc.

ISSUE

This application requests a special use permit, pursuant to Section 24.1-306 of the York County Zoning Ordinance (category 14, number 6), to authorize the establishment of a mini-storage warehouse facility on a 5.83-acre parcel located at 905 Denbigh Boulevard (Route 173) approximately 917 feet east of the Newport News city line and further identified as Assessor's Parcel No. 28-(1)-A.

DESCRIPTION

- Property Owner: Berrane Enterprises, Inc.
- Location: 905 Denbigh Boulevard (Route 173)
- Area: 5.83 acres
- Frontage: 448.50 feet on Denbigh Boulevard (Route 173)
- Utilities: Public water and sewer service not available; property is served by a private well and a private septic system
- Topography: Flat
- 2015 Land Use Map Designation: General Business
- Zoning Classification: GB – General Business
- Existing Development: Rip's convenience store
- Surrounding Development:
 - North: None; approved Colony Pines of York planned development site beyond
 - East: Dominion Virginia Power lines; vacant property beyond
 - South: None; approved South Park planned development site beyond (across Denbigh Boulevard)
 - West: None; Colony Pines subdivision beyond in the City of Newport News
- Proposed Development: Mini-storage warehouses

CONSIDERATIONS/CONCLUSIONS

1. The applicant owns Rip's convenience store on Denbigh Boulevard and proposes to construct a mini-storage warehouse facility behind the store on the same 5.83-acre parcel. According to the sketch plan submitted by the applicant, the facility would contain nine (9) warehouses encompassing 34,900 square feet of floor space. The office would be built as an addition onto the existing store and most likely would not serve as a residence for the office manager.
2. The Comprehensive Plan designates this area of the County for General Business uses in recognition of both its location along an arterial highway and existing development. To the rear of the parcel is the future site of the Colony Pines of York planned development. Although the Board of Supervisors approved this 404-unit development of single-family detached homes in 1993, construction has yet to begin. Across Denbigh Boulevard is the future site of the 151-unit South Park planned development of single-family detached homes, which also was approved by the Board in 1993 and has yet to begin construction.
3. In comparison with other mini-storage facilities that have been proposed in recent years, the proposed development is in a less visible location along a less heavily traveled corridor. The warehouses will be screened somewhat by the existing convenience store, and the applicant will enhance the existing grass front yard with landscaping in accordance with the Zoning Ordinance requirements for a twenty-foot landscape yard (approximately 11 trees and 32 shrubs). In addition, the applicant will provide a Type 35 (35-foot) transitional buffer to the rear of the subject parcel to shield direct views of the proposed warehouses for future homeowners if and when Colony Pines is developed. Finally, the applicant has proposed an attractive building design for the warehouses, and the approving resolution includes the standard conditions requiring that all outward-facing building façades be of brick, stucco, or similar decorative building materials and that all warehouse doors face the inside of the development.
4. The Zoning Ordinance designates Denbigh Boulevard as a greenbelt road, which means that a 35-foot greenbelt of open space would typically be required adjacent to the street right-of-way. However, the greenbelt requirements only provide for the retention of **existing** landscaping and do not address the need for new plantings where the width of the existing greenbelt is deficient. The subject parcel has 30-32 feet of grass between the edge of the street and the parking lot but approximately twenty feet (20') measured from the street right-of-way. The planting of new trees and shrubs in accordance with the planting ratios set forth in Section 24.2-242(h)(1) of the Zoning Ordinance will result in a more attractive greenbelt than exists today.
5. The proposed warehouses would be served by the existing Rip's entrances on Denbigh Boulevard; an additional entrance would not be permitted, and none has been proposed. Similarly, since the applicant does not plan to subdivide the parcel, it will be limited to a single freestanding sign. Because the existing freestanding sign identifying the convenience store appears to have the maximum allowable sign area, this sign will need to be modified if the applicant wishes to add identification for the mini-storage warehouse facility.
6. One benefit of mini-storage warehouses is that they do not generate significant amounts of traffic. The Institute of Transportation Engineers Trip Generation manual (6th Edition) contains a wide range of trip generation estimates based on different variables (i.e., acres, number of units, number of employees, and gross floor area). Staff believes the lowest of these estimates – 38 average daily trip ends – is the most realistic. Under all estimates, A.M. and P.M. peak-hour trip generation would be fewer than ten trips, which is negligible, especially when compared to most other retail uses that would be permitted as a matter of right.

7. The fiscal impact of mini-storage warehouses, though positive, is relatively low in comparison with that of other commercial uses permitted as a matter of right in the GB district, and the employment impacts are negligible. However, the viability of this parcel for more intensive retail development is seriously limited by the lack of visibility because of its location behind a convenience store.
8. Public water and sewer are not available along this segment of Denbigh Boulevard, and the resulting absence of fire hydrants makes fire protection a challenge. The nearest hydrant is approximately 1,700 feet west of the subject parcel near Woodside Lane in the City of Newport News. This is of some concern to staff, although the concern would be greater if a more intense commercial use, such as a shopping center or a motel, were being proposed. Utilities are ultimately planned to be extended to this area in conjunction with the construction of the Colony Pines planned development, and there are indications that such extension may take place within a year or so. I recommend that the developer of the mini-storage facility be required to connect to public water at such time as it becomes available, and a condition to this effect is included in the proposed resolution of approval. In the interim, or in the event that water is not extended, the approving resolution includes language authorizing an alternative means of fire suppression, such as an on-site water storage system (e.g., a tank or a pond) or some other arrangement acceptable to the York County Department of Fire and Life Safety.
9. The developer will be required to provide additional parking to accommodate the mini-storage warehouse facility. The sketch plan indicates sixteen spaces (16), which is fewer than would be required for the convenience store by itself. For a convenience store, the Zoning Ordinance requires one space per 200 square feet of floor area (4,533 square feet in this case), or 23 spaces. For the mini-storage facility, the Zoning Ordinance requires an additional two spaces for the manager's office plus 1.5 spaces per ten storage cubicles. This will require modifications to the applicant's site plan.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

The Planning Commission considered this application at its regular meeting on March 14, 2001, and subsequent to conducting a public hearing at which only the applicant spoke, voted unanimously (7:0) to recommend approval subject to the conditions recommended by staff, with one exception. In its original form Condition #12, which addresses fencing, would have permitted vinyl-coated chain link fencing; the Commission amended this condition to prohibit any chain link fencing.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR RECOMMENDATION

The proposed development is not likely to have significant impacts on adjacent properties because the surrounding area is almost entirely undeveloped. Although the mini-storage warehouse facility, if constructed, will precede any adjacent residential development, the applicant will provide a Type 35 (35-foot) transitional buffer entirely on the mini-storage parcel. This is consistent with good planning practice, which calls for transitional buffers to be provided on the more intense side of the zoning district line, regardless of whether or not the properties are developed. Views of the proposed facility from Denbigh Boulevard will be screened by both the existing convenience store and new landscaping that will be planted along the parcel's frontage. Therefore, based on the considerations and conclusions as noted, I recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve this application subject to the conditions contained in proposed Resolution No. R01-64.

I am proposing one modification to the conditions of approval recommended by the Planning Commission. Condition #15(b), which addresses the need for an adequate water supply for fire suppression, requires the developer to install or guarantee the installation of the on-site components of the public water supply and fire hydrant system and to secure that guarantee with a letter of credit or cash escrow. Because of the uncertainty surrounding the timing of public water extension to this area, and because of the tendency of dry pipes to degrade over time, the developer will likely elect to post a surety rather than install the infrastructure at this time. I recommend that the duration of this surety be limited to three (3) years so that the developer will not be subjected to an open-ended commitment of funds tied to public improvements that are being constructed by others and, therefore, are beyond his control.

Carter/3337

Attachments

- Excerpts of Planning Commission Minutes, March 14, 2001
- Zoning Map
- Sketch plan
- Building rendering
- Proposed Resolution No. R01-64